

Arizona Charter Schools Program Information Meeting

Arizona Charter Schools Program (AZ CSP):

MEGA Conference, November 17, 2011

Dr. Karen Butterfield, AZ CSP Director and Associate
Superintendent of Academic Achievement

Dr. Mark Francis, AZ CSP Administrator

Timeline

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) On-Line Application Deadline:

- Monday, July 2, 2012 (Tentative)
- Applications for new charter schools that pass the AZ State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) Administrative Completeness Review are eligible for AZ CSP application training.



Timeline

ASBCS replication deadlines:

Replication charter schools must have their applications approved by the ASBCS no later than Monday, September 10, 2012 meeting.

Timeline

School District and College/University Authorized Applications

- Charter schools seeking authorization from a school district or a college/university must have their applications approved by their respective authorizers by October 8, 2012.
- A copy of the approved application must be sent to the AZ CSP Office by October 15, 2012.
- Applicants will also be interviewed by a panel recruited by the AZ CSP staff.

Timeline

Eligibility for Grants Management Enterprise Common Logon to access the AZ CSP On-Line Application.

All AZ CSP applicants, whether new schools, replication schools or school district, college/university authorized charter schools, must have submitted their General Statement of Assurances hard copies and their W-9 forms to ADE School Finance by Wednesday, October 31, 2012.

All AZ CSP applicants must notify their respective authorizer that they intend to apply for the AZ CSP grant.

AZ CSP Preparation Timeline



Timeline

Training meeting for eligible AZ CSP applicants will take place on Friday, November 2, 2012 at ADE 1535 W. Jefferson, noon to 3:30 pm.

- Applicants will be trained in how to access and upload the application in Grants Management Enterprise error free.
- Applicants will be given a variety of examples of exemplary responses to AZ CSP application questions.



Timeline

AZ CSP On-Line Application Deadline:

Wednesday, January 25, 2013 by 11:59 pm MST

Timeline

- Applications are sent to a panel of experts who review the applications.
- The panel meets at the end of February 2013 for final scoring and ranking of applications.
- Recommended applications go before the AZ State Board of Education for approval at its March 2013 meeting.
- Awarded applications are then given a Project Number in Grants Management Enterprise.

Timeline for the 2014-16 Grant cycle

- The Grant Project Year will commence April 1, 2013 and end March 31, 2014.
- The period from April 1 to March 31 is called the Project Year.
- The grant is renewed up to two additional Project Years depending on the configuration of Planning and Implementation.

AZ CSP Application Timeline

Early November,
2012

AZ CSP Regional
Training meetings
for eligible
applicants

February, 2013

AZ CSP
applications
reviewed and
scored by peer
reviewers

April 1, 2013

AZ CSP Project
Year begins for
2013-2015 cohort

January 25, 2013

AZ CSP
application due
by 11:59 pm MST

March, 2013

State Board of
Education awards
grants



AZ CSP Program Goals

The AZ Charter Schools Program (AZ CSP) has three primary goals:

- Increase the number of high quality charter schools in Arizona, particularly those serving students most at risk in rural and urban settings;
- Improve student achievement to high academic standards in AZ CSP schools; and,
- Improve high school graduation rates in AZ CSP schools and prepare students for higher education or career readiness.

Grant Purpose

The AZ Charter Schools Program is a competitive, discretionary grant which offers financial incentives to new charter entities that can demonstrate the knowledge, skill and capacity to create and implement challenging curricula, engaging instruction and rigorous assessment.

Grant Purpose, continued

- Discretionary means that the grants are not funded by formula such as federal title funds.
- Competitive means charter entities must compete against other charter entities for the grant.

Grant Purpose, continued

Exemplars of challenging curricula include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Advanced Placement
- International Baccalaureate
- ACT Quality Core
- School-developed curriculum with enhanced standards that can be assessed post-10th grade AIMS and serve as predictors of college, technical school and career readiness.

Competitive Preference Points

- 5 Points for more than 30% Free and Reduced Lunch student population;
- 5 Points for Grades 9-12. Schools may serve any grade configuration as long as it contains 9-12.

Competitive Preference Points, continued

Schools must score at least 75 out of 100 points in order to qualify for Competitive Preference Points.

It is a stated goal of the AZ CSP office that its training and follow up technical assistance will help more schools meet the threshold for Competitive Preference Points eligibility.

General Statement on Charter Entities

- Federal regulation and guidance define a charter entity as an autonomous Local Educational Agency (LEA).
- The entity is that organization or individual developer which holds the charter.
- The charter is the legal contract between the authorizer and the developer of the school.
- A charter entity may have multiple school sites but each new site is not an autonomous LEA.
- The emphasis on creating an autonomous entity is to target academic, business and financial responsibility and accountability on that specific entity and no other.

Who may apply?

- Charter entities that have been awarded a new charter by an Arizona sponsor as defined in ARS § 15-183 (C) which includes Arizona school districts.
 - The charter entity must be a separate, autonomous entity from its school district sponsor.
- Charter entities approved by the AZ State Board for Charter Schools.
- Charter entities which have been allowed to replicate by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools.

AZ CSP Goals at the Completion of the Grant

- AZ CSP charter schools serving high school students will demonstrate a graduation rate higher than the state average for charter schools serving similar student demographics.
- 80% of AZ CSP charter high school students will meet or exceed challenging Arizona Academic Standards on each content area of AIMS.
 - Awarded schools will align their practice with new Common Core Standards

AZ CSP Goals at the Completion of the Grant, continued

- AZ CSP charter high school students will exceed the state average on the ACT or SAT.
- AZ CSP charter schools serving high school students will have more students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses or academic courses of equal rigor.

Grant Administration

The program is administered through ADE Grants Management enterprise.

- Awardees will receive their first funds by special payment.
- Subsequent funding is supported by GME draws through the monthly Cash Management Report process.

Scope of the AZ CSP Grant

Grants awarded by AZ CSP to eligible applicants shall be for a period of not more than 3 Project Years, of which the eligible applicant may use —

- not more than 18 months for planning and program design;
- not more than 2 years for the initial implementation of a charter school.

The grant may not exceed 36 months.

General Statement on Eligible Expenses

- Eligible expenses are those incurred from the date of the grant award. Pre-award costs related to project outcomes incurred between the time of the grant training and the grant award are ineligible and cannot be reimbursed.
- State and federal law do not permit Planning or Implementation Grant funds to be used for vehicles, renovation projects, construction and non institutional furniture. Moreover, establishment of petty cash funds or purchases of food and entertainment are strictly prohibited.

Planning Portion of the Grant

According to Section 5204 (f)(3)(A) of the Federal CSP statute, an eligible applicant receiving a Charter Schools Program sub-grant may use the sub-grant funds only for post-award planning and design of the educational program, which may include the following:

- Refinement of the desired educational results and the methods for measuring progress toward achieving those results;
- Professional development of teachers and other staff who will work in the charter school.

Planning Portion of the Grant

Planning funds can also be used for the following:

- Develop a marketing plan to advertise the school in the community prior to its opening.
- Staff necessary to plan the school such as a planning principal, a registrar, a secretary.
- To contract with vendors to provide specific services for the planning of the school.
- Recruitment and training of teachers.
 - Teacher training may be supported by stipends to teachers from grant funds.

Planning portion of the Grant

Planning funds shall not be used for the following:

- The renovation or improvement of facilities.
- Facilities infrastructure.
- To support a CMO or vendor without a specific contract for services provided.
- Any other charter entity .
- Salaries for school personnel that are covered by state funds once the school opens.

Implementation Portion of the Grant

- Implementation Grants are twenty-four months in length and will terminate from the date they are awarded.
- Implementation begins once the entity has an approved facility and is ready to open.
- Approved facility means that the school has a Certificate of Occupancy for educational use from its municipal Building Services Department and approval from the State Fire Marshall.

Implementation Portion of the Grant

- According to Section 5204 (f)(3)(B) of the Federal CSP statute, an eligible applicant receiving a Charter Schools Program grant or sub-grant may use the grant or sub-grant funds only for:
 - informing the community about the school;
 - acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies;
 - acquiring or developing curriculum materials; and
 - other initial operational costs that cannot be met from State or local sources.

Important Rule of Thumb:

The Primary purpose of AZ CSP is to build CAPACITY for Excellence:

- AZ CSP is not intended to support or supplant State Equalization payments.
- AZ CSP is not Title I; it does not support reading teachers, tutors.
- AZ CSP is not Title II; it does not support recruitment stipends for hard-to-fill positions.
- It does not support summer programs, sports or social programs.
- It does not support any staff salaries once the Implementation phase starts.

Awards

Startup grants are competitive in nature. Funding for subsequent Project Years is based on available federal funds, the appropriateness of the proposed grant budget, student enrollment, need, student academic achievement, and progress made toward grant goals as outlined in the startup application.

RESOURCES

AZ Charter Schools Program Webpage

[www.ade.az.gov/AZ CSP/](http://www.ade.az.gov/AZ_CSP/)